The Ladder

August
50¢

purpose of the

Daughters of BILITIS

A WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROMOTING THE INTEGRATION OF THE HOMOSEXUAL INTO SOCIETY BY:

1. Education of the variant, with particular emphasis on the psychological, physiological and sociological aspects, to enable her to understand herself and make her adjustment to society in all its social, civic and economic implications—this to be accomplished by establishing and maintaining as complete a library as possible of both fiction and non-fiction literature on the sex deviant theme; by sponsoring public discussions on pertinent subjects to be conducted by leading members of the legal, psychiatric, religious and other professions; by advocating a mode of behavior and dress acceptable to society.

2. Education of the public at large through acceptance first of the individual, leading to an eventual breakdown of erroneous taboos and prejudices; through public discussion meetings aforementioned; through dissemination of educational literature on the homosexual theme.

3. Participation in research projects by duly authorized and responsible psychologists, sociologists and other such experts directed towards further knowledge of the homosexual.

4. Investigation of the penal code as it pertains to the homosexual, proposal of changes to provide an equitable handling of cases involving this minority group, and promotion of these changes through due process of law in the state legislatures.

the Ladder

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contents

ONE PARENT'S REACTION BY ANNE FREDERICKS..... 4
DOB ON NEW YORK RADIO IN SEPTEMBER..... 7
NEWCOMERS IN THE FIELD..... 8
SEARCH FOR SAFETY, A STORY BY J. LORNA STRAYER..... 9
MOOD MISCELLANEA..... 14
IT'S 'BILL' AGAIN BY FLORENCE CONRAD..... 16
NEW YORK MATTACHINE CONVENTION..... 18
MASCULINE VIEWPOINT - OPEN LETTER TO A LESBIAN
BY BECKWITH T. STERNHAUSER..... 19
LESBIANA BY GENE DAMON..... 22
THE OFFERING BY I. A. BARTEL..... 24
READERS RESPOND..... 25

One Parent's Reaction

By Anne Fredericks

The experience of learning a daughter is gay undoubtedly evokes different responses from different parents so, to make clear some of the pitfalls that can wreck good family relationships at such a time, I can write only a personal account of what happened to me and my daughter.

For many years our relations had been excellent with, apparently, full confidence and trust on both sides. Suddenly her behavior began to change. She became evasive about the simplest things. She began to cut classes without being able to give a valid reason. Her excuses for coming home late were not convincing. I recognized she was going through some sort of crisis, but she had never been able to make articulate her deepest emotions so there was nothing I could do but watch and wait.

One day a rather senseless argument erupted into real bitterness on her part. She packed a few clothes and announced she was leaving home. No amount of reasoning or argument could sway her decision. It is obvious that now she had been waiting for such an opportunity, but I had no way of knowing that then. For a week or so I had no idea where she was. I called her friends, but they claimed to have no knowledge of her whereabouts. Finally one of them gave me a clue.

I found her in a dirty, run-down rooming house. With her was a much older woman whom I immediately recognized as being homosexual. Jean was ill and in need of money, but she still refused to return home. She kept herself so frozen that there was no chance of communication. My first thought was of "rescue." Something concrete must be done.

I went to the police, but they refused to do anything because she was of age. They even refused my request to stage a threatening scene and thus frighten her into returning home. I was still convinced that, once there, she would automatically become herself again. I was also

convinced that she had been "led into it" by the older woman.

Then began the weary round of presumed experts for help. The lawyer assured me that legal action was out of the question. My doctor, eventually to be of the greatest help, was more concerned about the effect of the discovery on me than trying to find immediate answers to my frantic questions. A psychiatrist tried to help by claiming that homosexuality was the result of a bad relationship with the parent of the opposite sex. This gave me temporary comfort but was not entirely convincing.

I constantly questioned where I had gone wrong in her upbringing. The feeling of personal guilt about the situation grew until I could think of little else. Like most parents, even the most sophisticated, I possessed a little knowledge and many cliches about homosexuality. Later on I was to be scornful of parents who refused to acknowledge the facts or were too stupid to recognize them. At this point, I displayed the same refusal to face the facts of the past.

Although Jean was exceptionally pretty, she almost never dated. I attributed this to the fact that we were both shy about making friends, and the misfortune of living in a neighborhood whose social status was unacceptable. I remembered the night she had come home hysterical from a movie date. I assumed from her very real disgust that she had been assaulted at the very least, but it turned out the boy had merely wanted to hold her hand. I didn't consider this particularly important or significant, nor the fact that she said other boys, after one date, were stupid and boring.

In the meantime, after weeks of not knowing where she was, she began to visit occasionally, but there was no real rapport between us. We both carefully avoided any mention of what was happening in her life, but small comments she let slip finally convinced me that she was really gay. I was ready to blame anyone or anything - the camps she had gone to, a teacher who had acted sus-

piciously, the bad choice of friends and, above all, the machinations of the older woman.

By the time she was ready to tell me, I had gone through the worst part of discovering she was different and was able to listen calmly, even to reassure her that I still loved her. Little by little we saw more of one another and our former good relationship emerged again from our common doubts and fears, although many times after I had seen her the old resentments and guilts reasserted themselves. My doctor, who knew quite a bit about my emotional state, kept insisting that love for another person was the most important thing to hold on to; that if she were crippled or blind it would have made no difference to my love for her.

I am happy to say that, after four years, we are more friendly, trusting, and, above all, understanding about one another's problems than we had ever been before. We are able to talk freely about her life in the homosexual world without either of us getting upset or backing away from any of the facts. I have met her friends. I understand a good deal about her past that had puzzled and upset me.

I have no set solution to the problem of averting a bitter termination of family relationships or such a strained relationship that it gives neither side any real satisfaction. I can offer only observations and some rather vague conclusions I have drawn from my own experience.

Parents should be more alert for signs of emotional disturbance and their cause. They should learn something about homosexuality. If the discovery comes as a shock, without any prior preparation, they should get good professional help, as much for themselves as for the girl.

Above all, they should try to keep in mind that the girl has probably been going through a most confused and confusing period; that an attempt to understand or at least to withhold judgment will do more good than any amount of breast-beating or hair-pulling.

For the girl, I would suggest that she have a little more confidence in the love of her parents and the flexibility of mind this engenders. To face calmly a situation which she has brought into being requires patience and, in some cases, the ability to endure vituperation, for there will be a certain amount of defensiveness in her attitude. She should understand that such a discovery is a guilt-producing situation for them and try to bear with the intense reactions of the first shock.

The most important thing for both girl and parent to remember is that the sexual habits or tendencies of a person do not make an individual either sainted or evil. Neither is required to abandon her own values or opinions. The basic requirements of good personal relationships remain the same whatever the orientation of the individual - trust, willingness to examine the reasons behind a world different from one's own, and love.

DOB on New York Radio in September

"How Normal Are Lesbians?" is the title of a taped discussion prepared in New York during the month of July with the participation of Florence Conrad, DOB Research Committee Chairman. The tape was made at the studios of radio station WEVD, for later broadcast as part of the "University of the Air" series directed by Mrs. Lee Steiner, psychologist and marriage counsellor. Discussants included Mrs. Steiner, Miss Conrad, and Mrs. Elsie Carlton, housewife. The discussion ranged over a wide field of topics related to Lesbianism, but took as its point of departure the surveys conducted by the Daughters of Bilitis (see the September issues of THE LADDER for 1959 and 1960). The program is planned for broadcast on the air September 12, 1961 and may be heard by listeners in the New York area.

Newcomers in the Field

The number of organizations dealing with some aspect of the homophile seems to be increasing daily. In the June issue of THE LADDER the effects of the dissolution of Area Councils by the Mattachine Society (resulting in a number of indepent "Mattachine" groups) was reported. In the same issue the formation of two new groups was announced.

Now word has been received of the HOMOSEXUAL VOTERS ADVISORY SERVICE, P. O. Box 5131, Terminal Annex Station, Denver 17, Colorado. This non-profit group, which states it is indepencent of other organizations and agencies which work in behalf of the homophile, seems to have as its aim the greater participation of the homosexual in community, state, and national affairs.

At the bottom of their letterhead appears the slogan "VOTE - Twelve Million Homosexuals! Get Civil Rights for the Homophile! Organize in behalf of justice in your area." As far as is known, the group has no chapters nor does it plan to establish chapters. It will, apparently, assist other groups to form along the same lines.

THE HOLLYWOOD ASSISTANCE LEAGUE, announced in the June LADDER as the "Homophile" Assistance League, now has a mailing address - Box 29048, Hollywood 29, California. This group is holding meetings in the Los Angeles area.

From Copenhagen, Denmark, comes word that "A 're-socializing center' for under-age homosexuals will be started here soon, a group of Danish welfare organizations announced."

And from Amsterdam, Holland, we learn that a new women's magazine called VOICES OF LESBOS has been started. It is being published by the Women's section of C.O.C. - which is the largest homophile organization in the world.

Search for Safety

A Story by J. Lorna Strayor

The music wakened her. A repetitious wail of saxophones and clarinets accelerated by the primitive rhythm of a drum. A door slammed, silencing the music as completely as though the entire world were in a state of suspension.

Miss Grant squinted at the clock. One P. M. Four hours in bed with about one hour of sleep. She rolled over, drew up her knees, and tried to slide back into oblivion. She reflected on her position for a moment, considered its possible significance, and deliberately straightened herself. The grind of a heavy motor grew until the window pane took on the sound of tinkling glass, diminished and joined the silence.

Sleeping in the daytime was difficult even under the best of conditions, she thought, then remembered. It didn't really matter if she slept today. She had the night off.

Rolling on her back, Miss Grant realized that she had been dreaming and with that realization a wave of warmth settled over her so that she partially rose on one elbow and threw back the blanket, settled back and surrendered to reflection.

She was on duty at the hospital and helping Mrs. Layton out of bed for the first time. Mrs. Layton slid her feet to the floor, wavered uncertainly and squealed, "Granty," at the same time reaching out for support. Miss Grant caught Mrs. Layton and held her while she struggled for balance.

Mrs. Layton smiled at her and said, "We look like a couple of lovers."

That was all. In a moment, Mrs. Layton felt stronger and they walked about the room, each with an arm about the other's waist.

Miss Grant closed her eyes and tossed her head, trying to erase the memory of that moment when Mrs. Layton's body pushed softly against her and those lips smiled as an offering. The memory persisted and was replaced by others equally disturbing. A hand that reached out for her, but

only for comfort; an arm that wanted nothing but support; a body which had need of only her care.

The next thing Miss Grant knew, the alarm was ringing and it was nearly time for dinner.

When she started out the hall to go downstairs, she smelled the rich sweetness of a freshly baked chocolate cake. It was for Harry, she knew. His favorite.

As she came downstairs, her mother said, "Did you sleep well, dear?"

"About the same as always. I still believe the night was made for sleeping."

"The hospital called."

"A new case?"

"They wanted you for tonight, but I told them you had other plans and couldn't possibly report."

"Why did you? I could have called Harry."

"I can't understand you. It's three weeks since you had a free evening. I would think you'd want to go out and have a little fun. And Harry's such a nice boy," She emphasized the such.

"I agree with you. Harry's a nice boy," Miss Grant said, emphasizing the nice.

Her mother's voice pleaded. "You're not getting any younger. I had been married four years when I was your age. I didn't want you to marry too young, but it seems to me you deliberately ruin your chances."

"Please don't worry about me, Mother."

"You won't always have me to look after you. If you don't find someone, you'll be alone when I'm gone."

"Maybe I will find someone."

"You've met a nice young man?"

"There are lots of nice young men." Then she saw her mother's look of anticipation. "No, I haven't met anyone."

"You meet so many at the hospital. I know you prefer men as patients."

"Not because I'm looking for eligible ones."

It was something of a joke among the nurses. When there was a choice, Miss Grant always preferred a male patient.

"Grant is afraid she'll be an old maid. Every male's a prospect," they teased.

She was asked, "What's wrong with women?"

"Too fussy," Miss Grant tried to say lightly.

"You're one."

"That's how I know," she answered.

For a long time she tried to convince herself that female patients were more demanding, more irritable, more completely invalids than male patients. Gradually, she knew the reason. She was more comfortable in carrying out her nursing duties with men. In caring for women, she was often nervous and even embarrassed. Miss Grant didn't know why. She did know that in caring for male patients she was at ease and felt able to cope with any situation which might present itself.

The phone rang.

"Is Miss Grant up yet?" It was the voice of the assistant directress.

"This is she."

"This is Miss Boles, from Lincoln Hospital. Could you help us with a hysterectomy tomorrow --- seven till three? I know you prefer male patients, but you're one of the few who isn't working."

"Of course. I'm always willing to help out where I'm needed," Miss Grant answered.

Mrs. King was ready for surgery when Miss Grant arrived. The night light of the lamp provided only enough illumination to outline the furniture and the figure on the bed. The heavily draped window excluded the greyness of early morning dawn.

Moving noiselessly across the tiled floor, Miss Grant studied the patient. A sixth of a grain of morphine had Mrs. King breathing slowly and evenly. The form on the bed was slight; the skin fair. The nose had a sculptured look. The mouth was full and soft-looking. A trace of lipstick remained on the lower lip. Wisps of dark hair outlined the face under the whiteness of the operating room cap. Miss Grant took the pulse, noticing the slender whiteness of the hand. The breathing changed. She saw large dark eyes, pupils now pin-pointed, watching her.

Miss Grant smiled. "I'm your nurse, Miss Grant."

"I'm glad."

"Go back to sleep."

She needn't have said it, for the eyes looked unseeingly for a moment, then closed.

The hour in surgery was routine and uneventful.. When Miss Grant accompanied the unconscious form back to the room, she was met by a solicitous Mr. King who said he had battery trouble, otherwise he would have arrived before the operation. Not until he was sure that Mrs. King was aware of his presence did he leave for his job.

Several days later Mrs. King said, "I didn't want a private nurse, but my husband insisted. Now, I m glad I have you. From the moment I looked up and saw you standing there, I wasn't afraid."

Miss Grant smiled. "I know. You thought I looked big enough to tackle anything."

"No, not that. But capable."

Mrs. King was immature and spoiled in a childish way.

"Mr. King says I'm to keep you until I'm ready to go home. He wants me to have the best of everything."

"I'm sure he does."

"Do you think I've had the best doctor for my kind of case?"

"Your surgeon has an excellent reputation."

"You're just saying that, I know. The nurses and doctors have to stick together."

Miss Grant smiled. This woman with her child-like ways amused her. She began to feel at ease.

"She's like my mama," Mrs. King told the doctor, referring to Miss Grant. "She makes me eat all kinds of horrid things."

The doctor smiled weakly, pinched Mrs. King's toes, and wrote on the chart, "O.O.B."

At first, Mrs. Grant protested. "Grantly, you know I'm too weak to walk."

"All right. We'll make it the chair for the first time."

Miss Grant went about it matter-of-factly --- dressing Mrs. King in a negligee and slippers, fixing the chair and gauging the distance from the bed.

"You're going to carry me!" Mrs. King squealed with delight as Miss Grant leaned over the bed.

The fingers of one hand brushed Miss Grant's cheek as the soft white arms went around her. She knew there was not time to hesitate and that she must not look at Mrs. King. During the few brief seconds it took to reach the chair, Mrs. King rested her head on Miss Grant's shoulder and murmured, "You handle me just like a baby."

(Continued on page 21)

mood miscellanea

TO THE RISING SUN

BY NIK

OH, MAJESTIC RISING SUN,
DOUSING NEONS ONE BY ONE,
AS YOU BRING ANOTHER DAY,
TO THEE WE MOST HUMBLY PRAY:
GIVE US NOW OUR DAILY DREAD
AND DON'T LET US BE MISLED
INTO THINKING MAYBE WE
CAN AND SHOULD AND SHALL BE FREE.
PLEASE DON'T MAKE US OBVIOUS.
HELP US BE ANONYMOUS
SO THAT WE MAY NOT BE FOUND
IN OUR SECRET UNDERGROUND.
FILL EACH LITTLE BUTCH AND NANCY
WITH THE PROPER SYCPHANCY.
MAKE US HUMBLE SO THAT WE
WON'T OFFEND SOCIETY.
HELP US CULTIVATE OUR FEARS;
CAUTION IS THE BEST FOR QUEERS.
LIKE THE OSTRICH, HEAD IN DIRT,
WE MIGHT KEEP FROM BEING HURT.
GRANT THESE THINGS, OH RISING SUN,
AND, THO' LIFE MAY NOT BE FUN,
WE AT LEAST SHALL LIVE THIS DAY
SAFE FROM THOSE WHO ARE NOT GAY.

A WALK IN THE WOODS...
THE WIND IS BLOWING.
A BOTTLE OF WINE...
THE TREES ARE BENDING.
A LOAF OF BREAD...
THE PATH IS NARROW.
CAREFUL...
TO STUMBLE IS TO FALL.
IF WE FALL...
WE'LL LOSE THE WINE.

TIGGER

* * * * *

I'VE A FRACTIOUS SPOUSE
WHO MESSES UP THE HOUSE,
KISSES IN THE HALL,
BACKS ME AGAINST THE WALL.

HATES TO WASH OUT STOCKINGS
SMASHES ANCHOR-HOCKINGS,
PILES UP DIRTY DISHES,
FEEDS THE CAT MY FISHES.

PUTTERS IN THE GARAGE,
LOOKS LESS THAN HALF HER AGE,
WON'T ANSWER THE PHONE,
SWEET AS A SUGAR CONE.

WON'T GET OUT OF BED,
WON'T EAT HEELS OF BREAD,
DRIVES ME TO DISTRACTION,
STILL THE MAIN ATTRACTION.

I'M LIKE A ONE-WHEELED BIKE
WITHOUT MY HANDSOME DYKE...

JACKIE L.

MALE CALL

THE ODDEST OF CREATURES
I EVER DID SEE
IS THE ONE THAT WE ALL
REFER TO AS "HE".

ONE WHO LOVES COMFORT
AND HOME-COOKED FOOD
ONLY NOW AND THEN FEELS
A ROMANTIC MOOD.

LIKES TO BE THOUGHT OF
AS DARING AND GAY
WITH HIS WOMEN AND JOKES
A WEE BIT RISQUE.

A CHILD AT HEART
AND A CHILD IN FACT,
TO GET HIM TO LABOR
TAKES MUCH MORE THAN TACT.

TREAT HIM REAL NICE
AND HE'LL ONLY ABUSE YOU,
TREAT HIM WITH SCORN
AND HE'LL FAIL TO AMUSE YOU.

FEED HIM AND LOVE HIM
AND MEND ALL HIS CLOTHES,
SOME MAY ENJOY IT,
I'LL LEAVE HIM TO THOSE...

CONNIE

It's 'Bill' Again...

It would be possible to deal with the very considerable substance of the Henry Hay article (see 'Masculine Viewpoint,' THE LADDER, July 1961) at any one of several levels. Partly because it is so exceptionally difficult to grope one's way through the Hay prose and partly because the subject has been written, talked and fought over ad nauseam, I am myself inclined to give up for the time being the attempt to do thorough justice to the article and instead will make scattered comments only.

The least important, probably, is the question of defending or further explaining the basis of the DOB anti-rights bill position. No, the DOBs are not "afraid to stand up for their rights." Many members who discussed the matter would, I think, be in complete harmony with Hay in opposing the bill idea primarily because it would favor a single minority. Hay's spelling out of this point would be seconded warmly by most DOB members.

It is true an important element in the DOB position was a feeling that the rights bill was bad tactics. The value of discussing what it is we all want to aim for is beyond dispute; the value of putting such a statement into the form of a bill of rights was the matter of dispute. Hay's "Bill of Particulars" is not unrelated to the DOB proposal to substitute for a rights bill a statement of the aims and goals of the homophile movement. But I do not wish to put the stress on defining past actions or positions, or particular groups against others. The issues are what is important.

I personally would like to underline that paragraph in which Hay distinguishes between the political fiction of inalienable rights and the political entity of conferred privileges. The link between the former and "duties owed" was an important part of the DOB position. You can't demand inalienable rights, as Hay indicates, and I would add you can't even negotiate unless you are in a negotiating position.

Hay's hint that there may be a necessary morality to be

framed for the homophile minority is a valuable ones. Such a morality may indeed differ from heterosexual morality in important details - but common principles might be found. For instance (to make a quick stab) "Provided that setting which permits a maximum productive contribution from each individual." Definitions and details are of course open to debate.

I am not at this point prepared to comment on the ultimate adequacy of a "mutual consent" bill for private homosexual behavior, in substance. As to tactics, this raises Hay's question of asking for two loaves when you expect only one or half. Bargaining tactics between equals in the political process might call for asking for two. But we are not equals in the bargaining process - we are a stigmatized minority, only just now, here and there, beginning to dispel some of the stigma. We will not be given a hearing unless we display those traits of moderation and balance which we are supposed not to have. Whether to call those who now cooperate with us friends or temporary allies, I think, is not too important; the point is that they will continue to cooperate with us only so long as they remain convinced that on the whole we are sane. Some of the suggested content for the rights bill, as originally advertised, would, I think, cast real doubts on this point.

In further regard to tactics, I differ from Hay in his view that a homosexual minority code must be concerned with no other form of sexual behavior (prostitution, adultery, etc.). At least I differ if he means by this to exclude any cooperation on the part of homosexuals with other groups working for general law reform in the area of "sexual offenses." To work, as Hay suggests, for Constitutional change in place of changes in state laws seems to me not only an impossibly big order, but it also raises other questions. If Constitutional privileges are to be sought which "State their premises in primal homophile values" (quoting Hay), what becomes of his view that civil privileges are indivisible? I am also at a loss to know what forms of Constitutional amendment could be sought. Perhaps what is needed here is clarification.

I have not studied the Wolfenden experience as closely as Hay, but my view is that the Wolfenden failure does not counsel us to shoot for still more than they failed

to obtain. In this country there is at hand a respected legal organization, the American Law Institute, which has drafted and may some day actively sponsor a model penal code for state use. It may not be enough, but it is more than we are likely to obtain in some time to come. It should provide a rallying point and a challenge for those homophiles who are interested in working for law reform.

- Florence Conrad

N.Y. Mattachine Convention

DESPITE THE DISSOLUTION OF ALL AREA COUNCILS OF THE MATTACHINE SOCIETY, INC., LAST MARCH (SEE THE LADDER, JUNE 1961) BY THE NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS IN SAN FRANCISCO, THE "MATTACHINE MOVEMENT" IS STILL GOING STRONG.

THE MATTACHINE SOCIETY OF NEW YORK HAS ANNOUNCED PLANS FOR THE ANNUAL CONVENTION TO BE HELD IN NEW YORK OVER LABOR DAY WEEK-END (SEPTEMBER 1-4). PRIOR TO THE BREAK-UP THE NATIONAL CONVENTION WAS SCHEDULED TO BE HELD IN THAT CITY.

TOPIC FOR THE CONVENTION HAS NOT YET BEEN ANNOUNCED, ALTHOUGH IT WILL FEATURE THE USUAL PANEL DISCUSSIONS AND GUEST SPEAKERS. THE PRICE IS $15.00 FOR ALL ACTIVITIES, AND RESERVATIONS MAY BE MADE TO THE MATTACHINE SOCIETY, INC., OF NEW YORK, ROOM 304, 1133 BROADWAY, NEW YORK 10, N. Y.

OF EXTREME IMPORTANCE IS THE FACT THAT THE AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION IS HOLDING ITS CONVENTION IN NEW YORK OVER THE SAME WEEKEND.

MEMBERS OF NEW YORK MATTACHINE, ONE, INC., AND THE DAUGHTERS OF BILITIS, INC., NEW YORK CHAPTER, WILL PARTICIPATE IN A DISCUSSION PANEL, ALONG WITH MEMBERS OF THE AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION. TOPIC OF THE PANEL WILL BE "DO THE HOMOPHILE-CENTERED ORGANIZATIONS SERVE A WORTHY SOCIAL PURPOSE?"

FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE NEW YORK CONVENTION WILL BE PRINTED IN THE LADDER AS IT BECOMES KNOWN. FOLLOWING THE CONVENTION A FULL REPORT ON THE VARIOUS SESSIONS AND SPEAKERS WILL APPEAR IN THE LADDER.

Masculine Viewpoint

Open Letter to a Lesbian

I was most sorry, that day on the train, when you started to take the seat behind me and saw the popular book on Lesbians I was reading. To see your sturdy little body strain as you lifted that heavy suitcase and marched off to another car made me want to cry out to you, "Please don't go." Of course I'm a big, formidable looking man. I can't help looking like this, but I'm different. I do understand and admire you and all your fellow Lesbians. I want you to consider me your friend. I'd like to help protect you against those who would whisper facts they should take for granted, whispering because they think something essentially clean is dirty. I'd like to say to them, "So that's how limited is your mind! Because these sensitive people, these often good and useful people, have one quirk in their makeup that makes them different from you BUT NOT INFERIOR, you have the audacity to be malicious and to impart hurt. How much better to have their quality, which entails a high degree of understanding and tenderness and love, the richness of soul it takes to give, than to have those other qualities you so casually accept. I mean cruelty and meanness, smallness and bigotry. If you could see yourself really objectively, you'd squirm with self-contempt."

But you were gone, in your trim, close-fitting jacket and four-in-hand tie, your short-cropped hair and flat heels, and I didn't want to embarrass or frighten you. Perhaps this is what I most would like to tell you, though:

I'm jealous of you.

Yes, I, a physically powerful, economically successful, highly accepted socially, man, am jealous of you. Jealous, even though I know that much of your life you must live a lie, that a love you feel so deeply you'd like to shout it from the housetops must be masked behind a girl-to-girl sociability, even though I know you have suffered humiliation when you were found out, and that you also have suffered painful losses as your fickle friends found others.

Why?

Because of your many good qualities. Because of your courage to be what you are when family and church and economic pressures say, "Don't be different. Put on your prison uniform of conventionality and we will reward you by letting you go through life in lockstep with us."

And because of your depth of human understanding, so much greater than any we might dare adopt or for which we might mine deeply in our souls in the hopes of even coming close. If we had the understanding, the empathy you do, how happy would be our wives and how wonderful would be our home lives. But the ground rules for conventional living don't seem to call for it. The "need" for business advantages doesn't allow it. And many of us never realize the constriction of these self-imposed, ridiculous-on-their-face limitations.

Too, as a man, I must accept my lot, my face, my body, my clothes, my mannerisms and I can do but little to make myself more attractive to my mate. But lucky you, in your bivalent role, can don exciting attire, caress-inviting satins, eye-enthralling nylons, beautifying cosmetics, provocative perfumes. You can visually impart to yourself the loveliness that lies within.

But this is the fate that is your good fortune. Feel that you are someone extra special, someone exceptionally fortunate, someone who has been given a gift denied to many.

Don't be afraid.

I suspect that there are many of us who dare not be anything more interesting than normal who admire and envy

you and gladly would exchange places in life with you if only a kindly fate would permit us to do so.

Meanwhile, accept our quiet friendship. Know that widespread amid conventional society there are many who regard you perhaps even more highly than you deserve, who respect you and, however they can, will rise in your defense.

Beckwith T. Sternhauser

* * * * *

Search for Safety

(Continued from page 13)

Miss Grant's head throbbed. She leaned down to place Mrs. King in the chair. It was then that Mrs. King kissed her on the cheek and giggled shrilly.

"Don't do that," Miss Grant said harshly, placing her fingers on her face to cool the burning spot.

"Why, Grantly," Mrs. King said, "you're blushing!"

With the pretext of getting ice, Miss Grant took the half filled water pitcher to the kitchen. She knew she could not stay on with Mrs. King. She wondered what excuse she could give for leaving a case.

THE *Gayest* SONGS ON WAX

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LESBIANA

BY GENE DAMON

175. THE HAPPY MEDIUM BY LISSA CHARELL. COWARD, 1960; FAWCETT CREST, 1961.

EXCELLENT NOVEL OF THE TV INDUSTRY WHICH INCLUDES MAJOR LESBIAN AND MALE HOMOSEXUAL CHARACTERS. PRODUCES A REALISTIC, AGREEABLE ENDING FOR MOST PARTICIPANTS - THE RATS GET THEIRS AND THE GOOD GET THEIR JUST REWARD. PLEASANT AND TIMELY.

176. THE SAVAGE SALOME BY CARTER BROWN. SIGNET, 1961. (HORWITZ PUBL., SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA, 1960.)

RATHER FUNNY MYSTERY NOVEL ABOUT MURDER IN AN OPERA COMPANY. HELEN MILLS, THE PRIMA DONNA'S FAITHFUL SECRETARY, IS A MUCH MISTREATED LESBIAN. SHE GETS WISE TO HER MISTRESS AND DESERTS HER, ALONG WITH THE REST OF THE FAITHFUL COTERIE OF BOTH SEXES.

177. A MINORITY BY GORDON WESTWOOD. LONGMAN'S, GREEN, 1960.

A WHOLLY SYMPATHETIC AND APPROVING GROUP ANALYSIS OF THE MORES OF 127 MALE HOMOSEXUALS IN THE LONDON AREA. THE AUTHOR CLEARS UP SOME OF BERGLER'S IDIOTIC REMARKS AND SOME OF KINSEY'S CONFUSION ABOUT LOVE AND SEX BEING ONE AND THE SAME THING.

178. THE SINGING AND THE GOLD BY CHARLOTTE MORROW LONDON. NEW AUTHORS LTD., 1960.

ENCLOSED IN A POIGNANT NOVEL OF YOUNG HETEROSEXUAL ROMANCE IS A LENGTHY PORTRAIT OF AN ARISTOCRATIC OLDER LESBIAN, "HENRY," WHO HAS "BURNT OUT HER EMOTIONS IN LIFE," FALLS IN LOVE WITH THE UNHAPPY HEROINE AND TRIED HARD TO HELP HER. WELL DONE, PARTICULARLY IN SHOWING GREAT SYMPATHY TO HENRY AND DEPICTING HENRY'S LOVE FOR THE YOUNGER GIRL IN A TASTEFUL AND EXCITING MANNER. PUBLISHER COMPARES THE BOOK TO OLIVIA, AND THE STYLE OF WRITING IS SIMILAR.

179. THE PURE AND THE IMPURE BY SIDONIE GABRIELLE COLETTE. NEW YORK, FARRAR & RINEHART, 1933.

THIS IS THE ONLY ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF COLETTE'S GREATEST BOOK, CES PLAISIRS. COPIES OF THIS SEMI-MEMOIRS, SEMI-NON-FICTION WORK ARE RARE, BUT THE SEARCH IS WORTHWHILE. WITH GREAT DISCRETION AND UNDERSTANDING THE GREAT LADY OF FRENCH LETTERS TELLS OF HER FRIENDSHIP WITH MANY LESBIANS AND MALE HOMOSEXUALS IN THE LITERARY AND ARTISTIC CIRCLES IN PARIS AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY. INCLUDED ARE LONG CHAPTERS ON RENEE VIVIEN AND 'THE MARQUISE', A LESBIAN TRANSVESTITE. THERE IS A BEAUTIFUL HYMN OF PRAISE SUNG TO THE LADIES OF LLANGOLLEN. ALSO CANDID, AMUSING OBSERVATIONS OF THE RANKS OF MALE DON JUANS, AND ANALYSIS OF A SORT OF MANY MALE HOMOSEXUALS.

180. PILGRIMS IN THE ZOO AND OTHER STORIES BY BRUCE BROOKS. BOSTON, BEACON PRESS, 1960.

THIS MACABRE COLLECTION IS RIFE WITH HOMOSEXUAL INCIDENTS. TITLE STORY IS MALE, OF THE SWISHY VARIETY. "EYE OF NATURE" IS RATHER GRISLY OVERT LESBIANISM. "JOURNEY THROUGH THE SKIN" FEATURES A LESBIAN AS MOTHER OF THE YOUNG HERO. ALL WELL WRITTEN AND INCLUDE SOME HOMOSEXUALITY, BUT VERY AVANT GARDE.

181. TWILIGHT GIRL BY DELLA MARTIN. BEACON BOOKS, 1961.

AN UNUSUAL INTUITIVE BOOK. THE CONFUSED LON, SO LIKE THE AVERAGE TEENAGE LESBIAN; MAVIS, THE UNFORGETTABLE NEGRO GIRL LON LOVES, WHO SPOUTS PHILOSOPHY IN AN ALTERNATELY CULTURED VOICE AND "NASSA" TALK, ARE EXCELLENT. THE DISCUSSION OF RENEE VIVIEN AND THE TRANSLATION OF ONE OF HER SONNETS ARE WELL WORTH THE PRICE OF THE BOOK.

182. SEX LIFE OF THE MODERN ADULT BY DR. LELAND E. GLOVER. BELMONT BOOKS, 1961.

A SURPRISINGLY HUMANE AND UNDOGMATIC TREATMENT OF THE LIFE HISTORIES OF SEVERAL LESBIAN AND MALE HOMOSEXUAL COUPLES. THIS TREATMENT IS UNDOUBTEDLY THE REASON THE BOOK WAS PUBLISHED ONLY IN PAPERBACK. A WORTHWHILE ADDITION TO THE "SCIENTIFIC" TREATMENT OF THE HOMOPHILE.

THE OFFERING

ENDLESS SOUNDS OF WATER RUSHED ACROSS THE SAND TO GIFT US WHERE WE SAT WITH A CURIOUS MIXTURE OF POWER AND SMALLNESS. WAVES, SILVER-FLECKED, ROSE TALL AND BLACK TOWARD THE BEACH AND BROKE HEAVILY AT THEIR END, MAKING PATTERNS, LIKE RIPPLES OF LAUGHTER, WHEN THEY AT LAST DREW BACK. MOONLIGHT BATHED US GENTLY, AS THOUGH KNOWING IT SERVED ONLY TO ENLIGHTEN WHAT TRANSPIRED BEFORE US. IT WAS AS THOUGH WE WERE ALONE IN A WORLD THAT FRIGHTENED, YET SOOTHED AND PROMISED NO END TO THE PRESENTS IT BESTOWED.

FOR A LONG TIME IT WAS SO, UNTIL I COULD FEEL AT LAST FILLED WITH THE FASCINATION THE SIGHT TENDERED, AND I TURNED TOWARD HER. SOMEHOW SHE WAS PART OF ALL THIS: A BLEND OF THE BEAUTIFUL AND OF THE PEACE OF LISTENING AND WATCHING. HER HAIR FELL SOFTLY TO HER SHOULDERS WHILE A FEW VAGRANT WISPS OF IT PLAYED ABOUT HER FACE. HER EYES PONDERED THE SEA AND SEEMED TO ACCEPT GRATEFULLY WHAT WAS OFFERRED. SHE FELT MY GAZE ON HER AND RETURNED IT FOR A LONG MOMENT, SMILING GENTLY. I MOVED CLOSE TO HER AND SHE SLIPPED HER HAND INTO MINE WITH THE SURENESS THAT THIS WOULD HAPPEN AGAIN A HUNDRED TIMES IN THE NIGHTS TO COME. HER LIPS PARTED AS I BENT TO THEM AND RECEIVED MY KISS COMPLETELY, HER MOUTH SWEET-TASTING AND WARM.

THE SEA WHISPERED THEN IN A LOUD VOICE I'D NEVER HEARD. AND THE WHISPER ROSE TO A SHOUT THAT ECHOED ACROSS THE SAND. I LEANED AWAY FROM THE KISS THAT LINGERED ON MY OWN LIPS, LOOKING QUICKLY INTO HER EYES. THEY MIRRORED WHAT I HAD HEARD AND I KNEW I HAD NOT BEEN WRONG.

PERHAPS SHE SENSED THE FRIGHT AND CONFUSION INSIDE ME, AND SHE DREW AWAY. SHE MOVED HER FACE SO THAT THE MOONLIGHT CAST A SHADOW AND I COULD NOT READ HER EXPRESSION. THE TIME WAS OVER, THE MOMENT ERASED BY THE CONFUSION THAT SWEPT OVER ME STRONGER THAN ANY MURMURS OF THE SEA.

THERE WERE NO WORDS SPOKEN BETWEEN US AS WE CROSSED THE DUNES AWAY FROM THE BEACH. THE NIGHT WAS CRISP NOW AND THE SOUNDS OF WATER WERE FADING BEHIND US. MOONLIGHT STILL SERVED TO GUIDE US TO THE ROAD PAST THE DUNES, WHERE SHE STOPPED TO STEP INTO HER SANDALS.

WE HESITATED A MINUTE, LOOKING BACK. OVER THE TOP OF THE DUNES WE COULD JUST BARELY SEE THE WATER GLISTENING. UNCERTAINLY I MOVED AWAY, ALREADY FEELING A SADNESS REPLACING THE TURMOIL WITHIN ME. SHE REACHED MY SIDE AND GRASPED MY HAND AND I FELT THE COOL IMPRINT OF A KEY IN MY PALM. I LOOKED AT THE KEY, THEN TO HER, BUT SHE HAD ALREADY GONE THE FEW STEPS TO HER CAR AND OPENED THE DOOR. I FOLLOWED, SADNESS AND INDECISION EBBING.

WE BOTH LAUGHED AS I GOT IN AND STARTED THE CAR. SHE LOOKED ONLY BRIEFLY AT THE LUGGAGE IN THE REAR BEFORE NESTLING CLOSE TO ME, AND I KNEW OUR DRIVE BACK TO THE VILLAGE WOULD BE ACCOMPANIED BY THE THOUGHT OF WHAT SHE HAD SAID EARLIER: "IF THERE'S LOVE, IT CAN BE."

- I. A. BARTEL

READER'S RESPOND

"I FEEL A LITTLE LIKE THE PRODIGAL CHILD WHO HAS COME HOME AT LAST AFTER YEARS OF DESERTION; AND THOUGH IT IS GOOD TO BE BACK IN THE FOLD, I AM UNCOMFORTABLE ABOUT IT AND FRIGHTENED BY THE LONG ABSENCE THAT HAS MADE THE FAMILIAR SEEM SO STRANGE.

"AND I WONDER, TOO, IF I EVEN QUALIFY AS A SUBSCRIBER, FOR, THOUGH I AM YEARS PAST 21, I AM ALSO A WIFE AND THE MOTHER OF THREE CHILDREN, WHICH MAKES ME A SORT OF PARIAH'S PARIAH, DOESN'T IT, IN THE TWILIGHT WORLD?

"STILL, IF THIS IS ANY RECOMMENDATION (AND IF IT ISN'T, AT LEAST IT'S A FUNNY STORY) I'VE JUST SPENT 14 MONTHS ATTENDING THE FAMILY GUIDANCE CLINIC. AT THE END OF MY LAST CONSULTATION, THE COUNSELOR THREW UP HIS ARMS IN HOPELESS (AND HIGHLY UNETHICAL) FRUSTRATION AND CROAKED: 'ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY HOURS OF THIS AND I CAN'T EVEN MAKE YOU DOUBLE-GAITED!' AND HE GAVE ME THE LADDER'S ADDRESS AS A GOING-AWAY PRESENT!"

E. M., FLORIDA

"IN THE JUNE 12, 1961 EDITION OF MIDNIGHT, THE MOST POPULAR TABLOID IN CANADA, THERE APPEARS A LETTER FROM TWO LESBIANS NAMED O'HARE AND KITTY FROM BALTIMORE, MD. THIS LETTER DEPICTS THE LIFE OF THE LESBIAN AS MORE PLEASANT AND GRATIFYING THAN THAT OF THE AVERAGE WOMAN. IT IS REFRESHING TO FIND PEOPLE WHO ARE SO FRANK AND SINCERE IN EXPRESSING THEIR OPINIONS. THE TWO WOMEN SAID THAT A GLANCE AT YOUR PUBLICATION MIGHT SERVE TO PROVE THEIR CONTENTION AND THEY LISTED YOUR ADDRESS. THEREFORE I AM ENCLOSING $1.00 FOR THE CURRENT ISSUE OF YOUR PUBLICATION AND HOPE YOU WILL PROVIDE INFORMATION ABOUT SUBSCRIBING TO YOUR PUBLICATION."

J. H., KANSAS

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EDITOR'S NOTE:

HERE IS THE LETTER WHICH WAS ADDRESSED TO THE EDITOR, MIDNIGHT, 2015 DRUMMOND ST., MONTREAL, CANADA. WE ARE INDEED GRATIFIED BY RESPONSE RECEIVED FROM MIDNIGHT READERS.

"THANK YOU FOR YOUR INTERESTING PAPER WHICH FORTUNATELY DOES PERMIT A PRO AND CON DEBATE ON THE SUBJECT OF HOMOSEXUALITY AND LESBIANISM. WE (LESBIANS) DON'T WISH SYMPATHY; WE ASK ONLY UNDERSTANDING. AS A GROUP WE ARE NO MORE INCLINED TO BE GENIUSES OR NE'ER-DO-WELLS THAN ANY OF THE OTHER 'STRAIGHT' GROUPS. THE MORALS OF LESBIANS IN ANY COMMUNITY ARE ON A PAR WITH, OR ABOVE, THOSE OF THE NORMAL CITIZENS. WE (MYSELF AND MY ROOM-MATE) ARE IN SHOW BUSINESS AND WE WILL ALWAYS DO OUR UTMOST TO ENTERTAIN EVERYBODY.

"THE LESBIAN ADOPTS HER WAY OF LIFE WITH NO DESIRE NOR INTENT OF CHANGING. THAT DOESN'T MEAN SHE CANNOT BE COMPLETELY - EVEN DEVASTATINGLY - FEMININE, AS MOST I KNOW ARE. SHE IS INDEPENDENT, CREATIVE, PRODUCTIVE - AND HAPPY. ALSO HER 'SEX' LIFE IS MUCH MORE PLEASANT AND GRATIFYING THAN THAT OF THE 'AVERAGE' WOMAN. A GLANCE AT THE LESBIAN PUBLICATION MAY CONVINCE YOU OF THE ABOVE. THE ADDRESS IS: THE LADDER, D.O.B., SUITE 108, 1232 MARKET ST., SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF."

O'HARE AND KITTY, MARYLAND

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